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Approved by:

William L. Brant

U.S. Embassy Mexico

Prepared by:

Benjamin Juarez, Gabriel Hernandez

Report Highlights:

**Transgenic Corn in Guanajuato and Puebla*The National Institute for Forestry,
Agriculture and Livestock Research (INIFAP) Changes Image**

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Mexico [MX1], MX

Welcome to Hot Bites from Mexico, a weekly review of issues of interest to the U.S. agricultural community. The topics covered in this report reflect developments in Mexico that have been garnered during travel around the country, reported in the media, or offered by host country officials and agricultural analysts. Readers should understand that press articles are included in this report to provide insights into the Mexican "mood" facing U.S. agricultural exporters. Significant issues will be expanded upon in subsequent reports from this office.

DISCLAIMER: Any press summary contained herein does NOT reflect USDA's, the U.S. Embassy's, or any other U.S. Government agency's point of view or official policy.

TRANSGENIC CORN IN GUANAJUATO AND PUEBLA

On October 1, 2001, an article published in Mexico City's daily, *Milenio*, states that Oaxaca is not the only contaminated state with transgenic grains, as the ministries of Agriculture (SAGARPA) and Environment (SEMARNAT) have claimed. A report coordinated by the National Institute of Ecology (INE) containing this information will be published soon. The report indicates grains sowed in Guanajuato and Puebla also contain genes of transgenic corn. This fact was confirmed by a laboratory analysis carried out by the Union Zapoteco-Chinanteca (Uzachi) and the study that the INE coordinates. According to the article, the agricultural engineer Lilia Perez-Santiago, member of the Uzachi, and David Quist, of the University of California Berkeley also analyzed corn harvested in Guanajuato. Their analysis results confirmed that the fields of Oaxaca are not the only ones contaminated with genetic material of transgenic corn. The University of California Berkeley was the first one to find evidence of the genetic contamination that affects local corn.

At the same time, the Agriculture Under Secretary, Victor Villalobos, has minimized the problem. "We have doubts regarding the validity of the sampling process," Villalobos said. "We have doubts that the contaminated region could be very wide, since it is very difficult that it happens (the contamination) under natural conditions." The newspaper article also said that the analysis conducted by the Center of Investigations and Advanced Studies of the IPN (Cinvestav), at the request of the INE, demonstrates that the genetic contamination also affects corn of Puebla. According Jorge Soberon, executive secretary of the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of the Biodiversity (Conabio), "Samples were taken in Puebla and positive results were obtained." Soberon expressed that it is necessary to collect samples at a national level, in order to know the real dimension of the problem, but mainly to protect the Mexican corn biodiversity. Reportedly, the results of the study conducted by Cinvestav will be given to members of the Intersecretarial Commission of Biosafety and GMO's (Cibiogem), during a special meeting with the Secretary of the SEMARNAT this week. (Source: *Milenio*, 10/01/01)

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR FORESTRY, AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK RESEARCH (INIFAP) CHANGES IMAGE

The announcement that establishes the foundation of the National Institute for Forestry, Agriculture and Livestock Research (INIFAP) as a public decentralized entity from the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fishery and Food (SAGARPA), was published in Mexico's *Diario Oficial* (Mexican Federal Register) on October 2, 2001.

Previously, INIFAP depended entirely on SAGARPA's policies and budget, as its main research institution. Now, this transition is aimed to provide INIFAP with absolute financial and administrative autonomy. Also, INIFAP will be in a better position for gathering improved scientific and technological tools to perform research activities regarding the agricultural, livestock, and forestry fields. Finally, INIFAP, will be able to effectively program, coordinate, promote and control all issues pertaining to scientific research, the development of new technologies, and generation of knowledge. (Mexican Federal Register/SAGARPA, 10/2/01)

REMINDER FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS ON PENDING PROPOSED REGULATIONS

PROY-NOM-081-FITO-2001: Proposed rule for the handling and elimination of sources of infestation of nonregulated pests, by means of establishing or regulating planting, harvest and destruction of residue dates. **Deadline for Comments: October 29, 2001.**

REPORTS SUBMITTED RECENTLY BY FAS/MEXICO

Report #	Title	Date
MX1170	Weekly Highlights & Hot Bites, Issue #34	9/28/01
MX1171	Exporter Guide	10/1/01
MX1172	Promotion Opportunities	10/1/01

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